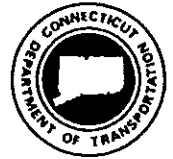




STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546



Office of the
Commissioner

An Equal Opportunity Employer

Public Hearing – March 11, 2009 Transportation Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Joseph F. Marie Department of Transportation

H.B. 5068 - An Act Authorizing the Operation of Certain 'Mini-Vehicles' on Highways.

From a safety perspective, the Department of Transportation (DOT) is concerned about the introduction of such low-powered vehicles into the mix. Studies have demonstrated that it is speed differential, i.e., varying speed among vehicles in the traffic stream which create accident potential.

H.B. 5068 does not define what a "mini-vehicle" is other than engine size. Depending on the vehicular dimensions, the Department could have concerns regarding height, width, etc.

While the bill does prohibit "mini-vehicles" usage on interstate highways, DOT feels the restriction does not go far enough to ensure that this low speed class of vehicle does not cause safety and operational concerns. There are many other State highways where the prevailing speed or speed limit is far in excess of the maximum speed indicated by some manufacturers of these types of vehicle.

If H.B. 5068 moves forward, the Department recommends the following revisions to the bill:

1. The allowable roads where "mini-vehicles" will be permitted shall have a speed limit of 25 mph or less.
2. Only licensed drivers are allowed to operate "mini-vehicles."
3. That "mini-vehicles" not be operated during hours of darkness unless vehicle lighting subject to the approval of the Department of Motor Vehicles is installed.
4. That the legislation clearly defines the term mini vehicle.

For further information or questions, please contact Pam Sucato, Legislative Program Manager for the Department of Transportation, at (860) 594-3013.